

OFFICE OF ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

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State Energy Council
Friday, March 21, 2008
Meeting Minutes
Kennedy Conference Room - Capitol Building
Des Moines, Iowa

Attendees: Mark Johnson, Karen Merrick, Joe O'Hern, Tom Shepherd, Joan Conrad, Stuart Crine, Roy Stanley, Bob Mulqueen, Brian Crowe, Michelle Bauer.

Business

Minutes from the March 7, 2008 were approved.

OEI-

- Update of Power Fund awards
- 16 of the first 79 pre-applicants have been asked to submit a full application
- Full applications received by March 24 will be reviewed at March 26 Due Diligence Committee meeting.
- All Energy Efficiency proposals have been set aside until we see what happens in the legislature and with the Gov's bill.
- There have been many questions regarding the type of energy education that should be funded
- Karen Merrick, IDED- Chris Nelson sent out an article from a journal about biomass going nowhere, a negative article from a prominent journal.
- Discussion about coal and oil prices going up. Means there is a lot more room for energy efficiency.
- Tom Shepherd checked Chap 473/ EO 41, no grant money for energy efficiency in state buildings.

Legislation

"Fix it" bill has 2 moving parts. A section deals with technical money to be spent by the fund in instances where the Power Fund Board deems that the fund should pay for technical review. Second moving part is language that clarifies when to make all elements of an application, especially proprietary elements, public. The Newspaper Association is thinking of having staged period over 2 years. Rep. Reichert came up with some other language. Some Republicans in Senate have asked Bob to simplify language. OEI has requested an increase in percentage of fund they are allowed to use for administration, last year asked for 3%, which was low, was cut to 1.5%. OEI is asking for up to 5% for FY 09.

Gov's energy bill- Bill has been diluted down to Kool-AID. None of the original proposals, save the Building Commission section, have survived. The bill could survive the second funnel if Sen. Hogg's bill gets out of the Senate and could possibly add some Rep. Peterson amendments in House.

Joan Conrad, IUB: Has 2 things she needs to add to an energy bill. 1) Non-controversial MRETS language that gives Iowa authority to join renewable energy tracking system. 2) IUB committed to Iowa Energy Center to try and lift salary cap. IUB wants to add "strike" language to remove salary cap, does not look like there is opposition.

Stuart Crine, DPS: If Building Commission part of Gov's energy bill survives, Home Builders asked if they would have a seat at the table, and yes, they will. Three Electrician licensing bills in legislature, we need all 3 to pass.

Karen Merrick, IDED: Regarding public awareness campaigns, and the process of accepting the Power Fund applications, suggests that there be a sub-committee of the Power Fund Board to come up with what they want their "message" to be, so that the applications are more focused and appropriate for the Power Fund.

Joan Conrad: IUB energy survey results showed homeowners are aware of what needs to be done but cost stands in the way. Fairly certain that IUB is going to work with Muni's to develop a unified education piece for energy efficiency.

Roya Stanley, OEI: Another piece of public awareness campaign would be who does the work now? What contractors does a person call when they want an energy efficient builder? Need to work on putting together different packages, new roof, insulations, windows and the contractors to which homeowners can go. Where does education of kids fit in? Is it a job of the Power Fund?

Karen Merrick, IDED: Is there a research piece that could be done in state gov't to show the effect, ROI, that tax credits to middle-income Iowans to do energy efficiency will have on the state treasury?

Roya Stanley, OEI: Not aware of a study, should probably check around a little bit.

Bob Mulqueen, OEI: Check out Iowa Policy Project's new study on Utilities energy efficiency programs. www.iowapolicyproject.org

Joe O'Hern, IFA: Might be interesting to track the value of tax credits to low income, when they don't see the transaction issues.

Karen Merrick, IDED: Need to work with contractors and builders, maybe a certification, how do homeowners know who to trust when they are looking to build energy efficiency?

NEXT MEETING:

Friday April 4, 2008, 9 am to 10 am in the Kennedy Conference Room in the State Capitol Building.